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Letter dated 4 October 2004 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Yangtze Declaration, which was adopted at the International Forum on Population and Development, held in Wuhan, China, from 7 to 9 September 2004 (see annex). I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly under agenda item 45.

(*Signed*) **Wang** Guangya
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Annex to the letter dated 4 October 2004 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

YANGTZE DECLARATION

International Forum on Population and Development

-- Implementation of ICPD/PoA and MDGs

7-9 September 2004, Wuhan, China

We, the members of an alliance of developing countries, Partners in Population and Development, composed of m ore than half of the population of the world and a fifth of its land area and many other developing countries, attended the 2004 International Forum on Population and Development. The meeting took place in Wuhan near the Yangtze River where the splendid Chinese civilization and culture originated in order to review the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted at the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD/PoA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in our countries on the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of both the ICPD and that of Partners in Population and Development. At the end of three-days deliberation, we adopted this Declaration in the spirit of "Peace, Cooperation and Development". We commit ourselves to honour, promote respect and implement this Declaration for the cause of sustainable development and human civilization.

We the participants:

Appreciate the achievements made by the alliance in elevating South-South Cooperation by strengthening individual and institutional capacity with respect to strategic leadership, policy dialogue and management of population, reproductive health and development programmes.

Note with satisfaction the international recognition of our efforts by the UN awarding the alliance with Permanent Observer Status through resolution 57/29 of the United Nations General Assembly in 2002 and specific recognition of Partners by the 21st Special Session of the General Assembly in a statement contained in paragraph 88 of the ICPD +5 in 1999, dedicated to South-South cooperation.

I

1. **Emphasize** the need for governments and the international community to demonstrate strong political will, commitment to fully realize the potential for South-South Cooperation with special attention to the problem of the most vulnerable, including those residing in the Least Developed Countries which are experiencing high rates of population growth and extreme levels of persistent poverty.

2. **Reaffirm** our strong commitment to the principles, objectives and actions contained in the ICPD/PoA as strategic directions for attaining the MDGs.

3. **Call upon** the international community in particular the OECD countries, the international finance institutions, to place population and reproductive health issues high on the international agenda to enable the smooth implementation of the ICPD/ PoA and the ultimate attainment of the MDGs.

4. **Further call upon** the international community to support UNFPA and other UN organizations involved in population and development in extending greater assistance to developing countries for further implementation of ICPD/PoA and MDGs.

II

1. **Note with concern that:**
   i. The number of people living below a dollar a day in the world has doubled to 2.2 billion during the last decade of the 20thcentury even though the total global income has increased by 2.5% during the same period; and that 10% (300 million) of the population of the alliance lives on less than a dollar a day;

   ii. Access to quality reproductive health services, in particular family planning, in the majority of the member countries is still very poor, with high levels of unmet need resulting in unwanted pregnancy, high fertility and unsafe abortion;

iii. Maternal mortality followed by infant and child mortality constitute the greatest burden and threat to women and children, with 55% of all global maternal deaths occurring in the countries of the alliance that could easily be prevented;

iv. The alliance countries contribute 50% to the global HIV/AIDS burden with a decline in life expectancy and economic productivity. Most of the new HIV infections are related to inadequate reproductive health services;

v. Globally, 1.2 billion adolescents aged 10-24 years are entering adulthood, giving rise to immense pressure on services, information and commodity needs regarding adolescent sexual and reproductive health;

vi. Gender inequality and inequity are prevalent in the alliance countries characterised by the majority of women, especially poor ones, having highly inadequate access to education, proper health care, gainful employment and social security systems;

vii. Illiteracy is prevalent in at least 50 % of the member countries where 115 million children are not enrolled in primary school, and whom 57% are girls;

viii. Several developing countries are already facing a population ageing problem, and that globally the number of persons aged 60 years and over will increase from 600 million to nearly 2 billion, doubling their proportion from 10 to 21 percent by 2050. The increase will be greatest and most rapid in developing countries.

2. **Fully understand** that the above challenges cannot be met and sustained unless we the members of the alliance of developing countries work together to develop a human centred perspective and good governance.

3. **Call upon** governments and international agencies to take all possible steps to more fully integrate the sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS

programmes, particularly with respect to measures to prevent the further spread of HIV infections.

4. **Call upon** UN member governments and the international community to accord due importance to integral relationship between reproductive health and the poverty alleviation, in the context of MDG + 5 in 2005.

5. **Encourage** a review of policy, legislative and programme requirements to improve the access of women to secure livelihoods and economic resources, alleviate their heavy housework burden, remove legal impediments to women ' s participation in public life, and raise social awareness through effective programmes of education and mass communication; to adopt reforms for eliminating all forms of exploitation, abuse, harassment and violence against women; ensure personnel policies and practices, comply with the principle of equitable representation of both sexes, especially at the managerial and policy-making levels and eliminate gender-based disparities in income, in all programmes including population and development. Likewise, an environment that facilitates male responsibility in reproductive and sexual health should be fostered. Furthermore, the issue of ageing should be addressed to create an environment for active, healthy ageing.

6. **Commit** ourselves to use best practices and share resources including reproductive health commodities, among developing countries for effective reproductive health policies, programmes and services aimed at improving the quality of life of women, men and children.

7. **Resolve** to review and harmonise policies, legislation, programmes and services that limit the access of adolescents and youths to full information and care and involve adolescents and youth in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of related youth programmes. We also resolve to encourage the young people to lead the planning, designing, implementations and monitoring and evaluation of adolescent and youth programmes in partnership with adults.

8. **Urge** all Governments and other relevant organizations, including bilateral and multilateral donors, the United Nations system, International financial Institutions, NGOs, civil society and the private sector, to pursue efforts at all levels including strengthened partnerships to intensify the implementation of ICPD/PoA and MDGs.

III

1. **We note with concern that:**

   i. The budgetary goals for implementing ICPD/PoA set in 1994 were US$ 17 billion by 2000 and US$18.5 billion by 2005, of which 2/3 was to come from developing countries and 1/3 from developed countries and that while until the end of 2003, developing countries had met 92% of the target, developed countries had met only 50% of the target.

   ii. To reach some of the key goals set in the Millennium Declaration, particularly poverty eradication, an annual investment of US$66 billion by the year 2007 is needed, which means that the developing countries would have to increase budgetary spending on health by an additional 1% of GNP by 2007 and 2% by 2015 (US$35 billion and US$63 billion respectively), which is unaffordable to most developing countries.

   iii. In 2003, the world cannot ensure the disbursement of 65 billion dollars for poverty reduction or 5 billion dollars to improve reproductive health including family planning and the prevention of HIV/AIDS in the face of emerging global concerns such as security currently costing 900 billion dollars a year.

2. **Urge** developed countries to increase their Official Development Assistance (ODA) as per the international agreement, which is 0.7% of GNP of OECD countries and generate US$200 billion, an amount that will be more than enough to close the financial gap preventing countries from meeting the goals set out at the ICPD and the Millennium Summit.

3. **Recognize** that both the ICPD/PoA and MDGs are comprehensive and human centred, and provide strategic directions to socio-economic development, prevention of HIV/AIDS, maternal, infant and child health and universal education with particular attention to the cross-cutting theme of women empowerment and gender equality and equity including the education of the girl child and women participation in labour force.

4. **Strongly commit** ourselves to promote, execute, follow up and monitor the implementation of this Yangtze Declaration which will immensely contribute to the attainment of ICPD goals and MDGs, particularly in low income and least developed countries.